

HIBISCUS ROSA-SINENSIS PLANT NAMED 'NOVA'

BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis L.

5

VARIETAL DENOMINATION

The new plant has the varietal denomination 'NOVA'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L., which was developed in a controlled breeding program in Webster, Texas.

 The genus *Hibiscus* comprises about 250 species of herbs, shrubs and trees in warm temperate and tropical regions; with leaves usually simple, mostly palmately veined, lobed or parted; flowers mostly solitary in the leaf axils but sometimes in racemes, corymbs or
15 panicles. *Hibiscus* is included in the family Malvaceae, which comprises about 95 genera of herbs, shrubs and trees originating in tropical and temperate regions. *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* is a glabrate shrub, seldom over 8 feet tall in cultivation, but treelike to 15 feet or more in tropical regions. Leaves to 6-inches long, ovate, usually serrate, mostly glossy green. Flowers solitary in upper leaf axils.

20 The new Hibiscus is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the inventor in Webster, Texas. The objective of the program was to create new Hibiscus selections with improved bloom quality, color and floriferousness, plants that can be commercially produced on their own root systems, and improved plant habit with regard to vigor and postproduction longevity.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

 The new variety was discovered in a controlled breeding program of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* and differs from its parents and other known cultivars of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* by the following characteristics in combination:

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1. Upright, compact symmetrical plant habit that is suitable for container production;
2. Healthy green foliage;
3. Vigorous growth habit;
4. A heavy textured double flower with a bright yellow center, yellow veins and shades
5 or coral to orange throughout the body of the flower;
5. Free-flowering.

Asexual reproduction of the new variety by stem cuttings, performed in Webster, Texas and Fulshear, Texas have confirmed that the distinctive characteristics of the new variety are stable and transmitted to succeeding generations, and the new variety reproduces
10 true to type.

COMPARISON WITH PARENTS AND OTHER CULTIVARS

'Nova' is distinguished from its female parent 'Green Hornet' (not patented) by having a different flower form and color; 'Green Hornet' has a single and greenish yellow
15 bloom. 'Nova' is distinguished from its male parent 'Red Snapper' (not patented) by a dissimilarity of flower color; flowers of 'Red Snapper' are red and white. Also, the flower petals of 'Red Snapper' do not overlap as nicely as the petals of 'Nova'; consequently, flowers of 'Nova' have a much fuller appearance.

Plants of 'Nova' can be compared to plants of the cultivar 'Jimmy John' (not
20 patented). However, in side-by-side comparisons conducted in Webster, Texas, plants of 'Nova' differ from plants of the cultivar 'Jimmy John' in the following characteristics:

1. Flowers of 'Nova' are brighter in color than flowers of 'Jimmy John';
2. Plants of 'Nova' are easier to propagate via vegetative cuttings than plants of the cultivar 'Jimmy John';
- 25 3. Plants of 'Nova' possess healthier foliage and a better growth habit than the cultivar 'Jimmy John'.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The accompanying illustrations show a specimen of the new cultivar in a photographic illustration as true to color as is reasonably possible to make in an illustration of this character.

- 5 FIG. 1 illustrates a side perspective view of a typical plant of 'Nova';
 FIG. 2 illustrates the scale of a typical flower of 'Nova'; and
 FIG. 3 illustrates the typical young to mature foliage of 'Nova'; the abaxial and
 adaxial surfaces are shown at each stage.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW VARIETY

'Nova' has not been observed under all possible environmental, cultural and light conditions. The following observations and descriptions are of plants grown in Fulshear, Texas, in November 2003, under polypropylene shade cloth providing a 30 percent light reduction, and under conditions which closely approximate commercial production. Plants described were approximately one year old and in a #3 nursery container. In this description, color references are to the *Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart* (2000) and terminology used in the color descriptions herein refers to plate numbers in this color chart. Phenotypic expression may vary with light intensity, cultural and environmental conditions.

10 CLASSIFICATION:

Botanical:	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> L. 'Nova'
Parentage	
Female or Seed Parent:	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> 'Green Hornet' (not patented)
15 Male or Pollen Parent:	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> 'Red Snapper' (not patented)
Propagation:	By stem cuttings
Time to initiate rooting:	Approximately 14 to 21 days at 21-24 C
Time to develop roots:	Approximately 42 to 56 days at 21-24 C
20 Root description:	Fine to medium; fibrous; freely branching

PLANT

Size	
Height:	Approximately 51 cm from soil level to top of flowers
25 Diameter/Spread:	Approximately 60 cm
Form and Growth Habit:	Perennial, evergreen shrub; mostly upright and somewhat spreading.
Branching:	Freely branching; approximately 4 to 8 lateral branches develop after pinching

Lateral Branches:	Approximately 20 cm long and 5 mm in diameter
Internode Length:	Approximately 4 cm

5 LEAF

Shape: Cordate

Apex: Obtuse

Base: Cordate

Leaf size: Approximately 8.5 cm long and
10.5 cm wide

Arrangement: Alternate, single; symmetrical

Margin: Entire

Aspect: Undulate

Texture/Substance: Glabrous, shiny

15 Coloration

Young Foliage

Upper side: Near Yellow-Green Group 146A

Under side: Near Yellow-Green Group 146B

Mature Foliage

Upper side: Near Yellow-Green Group 147A

Under side: Near Yellow-Green Group 147B

Petioles

Size: Approximately 3.5 cm long, 3 mm across

Coloration: Near Yellow-Green Group 147B

Texture: Smooth

Hardiness: USDA Zone 10 (30°F to 40°F)

Pests/Diseases: Resistance to known Hibiscus diseases had
not been observed on plants grown under
conditions approximating commercial
practices.

INFLORESENCE

	Bloom Period	Typically year-round under subtropical and tropical conditions
5	Flower Arrangement:	Arranged singly at terminal leaf axils; free-flowering with 3 to 4 flower buds and/or open flowers per terminal apex; flowers face upright and slightly outward.
10	Flower Appearance:	A heavy textured double flower with bright yellow centers, yellow veins and shades of coral to orange throughout the body of the flower; flowers are open for about two days before closing; flowers persistent.
	Flower Diameter:	Approximately 17 cm
	Buds (just prior to showing color)	
15	Rate of Opening:	Approximately 1 or 2 days, depending on temperature
	Shape:	Elliptic
	Length:	Approximately 3.5 cm
	Diameter:	Approximately 2.5 cm
20	Color:	Near Yellow-Green Group 144C
	Fragrance:	None noted
	Petals	
	Number/Arrangement:	Corolla consists of approximately 30 to 35 petals
25	Shape:	Spatulate with rounded apex
	Length:	Range from approximately 7 to 9 cm
	Width:	Range from approximately 3 to 6.5 cm
	Margin:	Entire, but ruffled
	Texture:	Smooth
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Color

5	Upper Surface:	The centers range from near Yellow Group 13B to C; The coral to orange portion of the petals range from near Orange-Red Group 34A through 35A; venation on the petals is near Yellow-Orange Group 18A.
	Lower Surface:	The majority ranges from near Orange-Red Group N34B to 35C, eventually fading to either Yellow-Orange Group 20A or Yellow Group 10C at the base of the petal.
10	Sepals	
	Number/Arrangement:	5 sepals fused into a star-shaped calyx
	Shape:	Linear with acuminate apices
	Margin:	Entire
15	Color:	Near Yellow-Green Group 144A
	Peduncles	
	Length:	Approximately 4 cm
	Diameter:	Approximately 2 mm
	Angle:	Approximately 90 degrees
20	Strength:	Strong, flexible
	Color:	Near Yellow-Green Group 144B

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Androecium

25	Stamens:	Numerous; approximately 50
	Stamen Length:	Approximately 5 mm
	Filament Color:	Near Yellow Group 4C
	Anther Size:	Approximately 1 mm
	Pollen Amount:	Abundant
30	Pollen Color:	Yellow Group 13B

Gynoecium

	Pistil Length:	Approximately 6 cm
	Stigma Appearance:	5, rounded
	Stigma Diameter:	Approximately 2 mm
5	Stigma Color:	Near Orange Group N25A
	Style Color:	Near Yellow-Orange Group 18A
	Seed Production:	Seed production has not been observed